

Erectile dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction has garnered an immense amount of media exposure in the past several years. Hype aside, there exists both science to explain the problem and evidence to guide its clinical management. Fazio and Brock review the physiology of erection, the pathophysiology of erectile dysfunction and the evidence for the efficacy of the phosphodiesterase type 5 inhibitors (sildenafil, vardenafil and tadalafil) that have become the first-line agents for the treatment of erectile dysfunction.

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journalist in seeking out the “hot” story, and the scientist in pursuing academic promotion, grant funding or financial gain. Condit provides useful advice to researchers for conducting interviews with journalists.

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Gaps in the care of patients with COPD

Patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are routinely admitted to hospital because of acute exacerbations of their disease. Some are admitted repeatedly. Choi and colleagues reviewed the charts of patients admitted to a Toronto hospital during a 1-year period and found that gaps in the care of inpatients were common and were associated with adverse events in hospital. These gaps ranged from failure to assess the patient’s technique in using a metered-dose inhaler to failure to adjust levels of supplemental oxygen.

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How the print media report genetic research

The media are often perceived to exaggerate and sensationalize stories to increase exposure to the public. Given that most people obtain information on scientific and medical research largely from the media and that public opinion can drive policy, it is important to know whether the information the public receives is indeed accurate.

Bubela and Caulfield appraised articles published on genetic research between 1995 and 2001 in 26 newspapers from Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Australia. They found that only 11% of the newspaper articles contained moderately to highly exaggerated claims.

In a related commentary, Condit points out that journalists and scientists alike may contribute to exaggerated claims in newspapers: the

In Synopsis

In Analysis, Burton and Wong examine the effect that increasing numbers of women entering medical school may have on the future delivery of health care (see page 1385). In Practice, the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care presents its recommendations on postmenopausal hormone replacement therapy for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (see page 1388). In Public Health, Weir and Lipscombe describe the metabolic syndrome and provide simple measures to prevent it (see page 1390). For this issue’s literature review, Rabeneck comments on a study that explores the usefulness of CT technology in colorectal cancer screening (see page 1392). In Clinical Vistas, Simon and colleagues offer a glimpse into a rare cause of cognitive decline, seizure and stroke (see page 1393).

